

# R E P O R T

OF THE

LORDS COMMITTEES,

APPOINTED TO

EXAMINE THE PHYSICIANS

WHO HAVE ATTENDED

HIS MAJESTY,

DURING HIS ILLNESS,

Touching the State of His Majesty's Health.

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JOHN G. COMPTON

EXAMINER IN PHYSICS

AND HIS ATTENDANT

THIS MAY 1891

DEAR MR. COMPTON

Touching the sale of the Manuscript

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# R E P O R T.

By the Lords Committees appointed  
to examine the Physicians who  
have attended His Majesty  
during his illness, touching the  
state of His Majesty's health.

## ORDERED TO REPORT,

**T**HAT the Committee have met, and examined the several Physicians who were sworn for that purpose at your Lordships Bar; and the evidence given by them before the said Committee was as follows:  
Doctor FRANCIS WILLIS called in and examined.

You are desired to acquaint the Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of coming in person to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

Certainly not capable.

A What

What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

If it was any common person, I should scarce doubt of his recovery; I have great hopes of His Majesty's recovery; but I am afraid it may be retarded by his recollection of his present indisposition.

Can you form any judgement or probable conjecture of the duration of His Majesty's illness?

I cannot; either judgement or conjecture.

Is His Majesty's recovery more probable or not?

A great deal more probable.

What degree of experience has Dr. Willis had himself, or does he know others to have had, in this particular species of disorder?

I have had a great deal for twenty-eight or twenty-nine years.

Have you considered this kind of disorder under which the King labours as liable to be classed under different species?

In my answer to that, I am apprehensive it would describe the sort of disorder more than your Lordships would chuse: His Majesty's indisposition is attended with symptoms of violence



lence and acuteness. Another species of this indisposition is attended with lowness of spirits and despair; the latter of which is the most difficult to be cured.

Whether the disorder is not of a different species when occasioned by external causes, or when it is not to be traced back to such causes?

We must judge of the species of a disorder by the symptoms: but when we know the cause is from a blow, from excesses of any kind, from sudden frights, from watching, from too great attention to business, or any sudden misfortune, the cure will be brought about, in all probability, by an attention to what we judge to be the cause.

Have you taken such observation of His Majesty's illness, as to trace it to any of these causes?

I have attended His Majesty so short a time I can only form a guess, or hazard an opinion; from what I am told of His Majesty's mode of life, therefore I would not have your Lordships imagine I presume to give it as a positive opinion: but from a detail of His Majesty's mode of life for twenty-seven years, I should rather think that His Majesty's indisposition  
has

has been brought about by using very strong exercise, taking little sustenance, watching, or want of sleep, perhaps when his mind was upon the stretch with very weighty affairs; and I am the more inclined to think I may guess right, because the medicines that were to meet with such causes, which were ordered on Sunday last, have had the effect that I could wish.

Have any favourable symptoms of convalescence taken place since you attended?

His Majesty's nerves are less irritable; which must precede convalescence.

Do you regard that as a favourable symptom?

Yes.

Whether any actual cessation of the disorder has obtained since you attended the King?

His Majesty is much calmer, eats and drinks, takes medicines, and goes to bed quietly.

Do you consider that, or any other symptoms you have observed, as a cessation of his disorder?

As a partial, not a total cessation.

How long have you attended His Majesty?

From



From Friday morning last, at about ten or eleven o'clock.

How soon have patients under your care, affected with a similar disorder, usually recovered?

If I am called in within three months, from three months to fifteen or eighteen months: sometimes they recovered much sooner than three months, two months, six weeks, or one month:—I have had some two years under my care and recovered afterwards. I cannot presume to form any opinion as to the time.

What do you understand by recovery?

To be perfectly well and fit for business in all respects, as he was before.

Do you make any distinction betwixt complete and temporary recovery?

As complete a recovery as if it was from an ague, fever, or cold, with proper attention to his mode of life.

In the course of your experience has it happened that persons recovered by you have come a second time under your care?

They have: but I do not think that they are more likely to relapse into such an indisposition, than any one is into a violent fever.

Whether,

Whether, when you have sent a person out as cured, and that person returns under your care again, you consider that as a new disorder, or a relapse?

If a long time intervenes, I consider it as a new disorder.

What do you call a long time?

Three or four years.

Whether short of that, you look upon it as a relapse or a cure?

If it was within a year, I should call it a relapse.

Within what time, as near as you can recollect, the majority of patients dismissed by you as cured, whom you say have returned again under your care, have returned?

I have had them return from one to eighteen years, but cannot speak as to majorities.

Doctor RICHARD WARREN called in and examined.

You are desired to acquaint this Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of coming to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

Incapable.

What



What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

The hopes must be determined by the probability of cure, and that can be judged of only by what has happened to others; by which I find that the majority of those who have been disordered in a manner similar to His Majesty, have recovered: but I do not mean by the word "similar," His Majesty's particular disorder, but that disorder in general.

Can you infer from thence, that it is more probable that His Majesty will or will not recover?

That it is more probable that he will recover.

Does Dr. Warren apply this to the particular case of His Majesty, or to cases in general?

To cases in general.

Can you form any judgement, or probable conjecture, of the duration of His Majesty's illness?

No.

**B**

Whether,

Whether, so far as experience enables Dr. Warren to judge of His Majesty's disorder, he thinks it more probable that His Majesty will or will not recover, so as to render him capable of public business?

I have no data sufficient to ground an answer upon this question.

Whether there has been any cessation of His Majesty's disorder since you attended him?

No.

Are there any signs of a returning understanding?

No.

Since you was examined last at the Privy Council, have there been any more favourable symptoms of His Majesty's recovery?

There are no symptoms of this disorder, but the single one of want of understanding. The words and the actions of persons under this disorder are accidental, and depend upon the difference of the persons themselves. A man that has a variety of ideas, will talk and act very differently from one who has fewer ideas, or has led a different course of life:

His



His words and actions will be determined by the peculiarity of the man, and not by the distemper. Under this explanation the symptoms are more favourable.

Is the probability of His Majesty's recovery of his understanding varied or affected any way by the actual duration of his illness?

The probability of cure diminishes as the time of the disorder lengthens.

Has this disorder continued so long, as to enable you, from thence, to pronounce upon the probability of his recovery?

No.

How long have you attended His Majesty?

I saw him first on the seventh of November.

Whether there has been any difference of opinion amongst the physicians, as to the nature of the case?

It has been the custom of His Majesty's physicians, from the day that I went first to Windsor, to put down in writing a description of the state of His Majesty's health every evening, and for each of them to sign the

paper; by which it will appear that there never was any difference of opinion among the physicians, with respect to the case as it is put. This was continued daily till His Majesty came to Kew.

**Sir GEORGE BAKER** called in and examined.

You are desired to acquaint this Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of coming in person to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

The state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of any public business.

What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

The hopes I entertain of His Majesty's recovery are founded upon an idea of its being probable. That idea of probability is suggested to me by past experience, as well original as that of other physicians, in cases similar to that of His Majesty.



Can you form any judgement, or probable conjecture, of the duration of His Majesty's illness?

I can form no judgement, or probable conjecture, of the duration of his disorder.

Has there been any cessation of the disorder since you first attended His Majesty?

There was a cessation of the disorder since my first suspicion.

At what period did you first suspect the nature of his disorder?

In the evening of Wednesday, October the 22d last.

What length of time did that cessation continue?

I conceived the suspicion that evening; and the next morning, when I visited His Majesty very early, he appeared to me to be perfectly well. On the Monday following I saw His Majesty at Windsor, and then saw more signs of the disorder.

Has there been any cessation since Monday, October the 27th?

None.

At

At this period of time do you see any signs of a returning understanding?

I see none.

Did you see His Majesty between the 23d and the 27th of October?

I saw His Majesty on the 24th and 25th of October, and I saw him again on the 27th, when he had a degree of his present disorder, but in nothing like the state in which it has appeared since.

Had His Majesty been afflicted with any bodily disorder immediately preceding the 22d of October?

On the 17th of October His Majesty was attacked by a disorder in which I had once before seen his Majesty, and to which I understand he had been very subject: That disorder I conceive to be biliary concretions in the gall duct.

How long did he continue in that illness?

It lasted the greatest part of the 17th.

Did it last any longer, or did it take a different turn?

It



It returned twice on Monday and Tuesday following; on Monday it was not so severe, and went off very soon; on Tuesday it was very trifling.

Is it your opinion that His Majesty's present malady has been caused by, or has any relation to his previous disorder?

It is not my opinion that His Majesty's present malady has any relation to his previous disorder.

Had not his Majesty a rash previous to Friday the 24th of October?

On Friday, October the 17th, in the course of that day, it was mentioned to me that His Majesty had had a rash, and upon that account his skin was examined, and there did appear some marks of there having been a rash, which had spent itself.

Have not you heard that His Majesty, during the time that the rash was upon him, wet his feet and sat in wet stockings?

I was informed that on Thursday the 16th His Majesty rose very early and walked more than four hours; and afterwards went to St. James's

James's without having changed his stockings;  
which were very wet.

Did not you understand the rash had been  
checked by his Majesty having sat in wet  
stockings?

It was so imagined.

By whom?

By some in the family.

Can you say that a rash so checked may not  
have been the occasion of His Majesty's pre-  
sent disorder?

I can only say that it is not my opinion;  
for I conceive that if His Majesty's present  
malady is supposed to be occasioned by the  
checking of the rash, the effect would have  
followed the cause more immediately.

Whether His Majesty's legs swelled after it  
was imagined the rash was checked?

The 18th of October the left foot was a  
little inflamed, and in consequence swelled;  
afterwards the right foot.

Did the swelling of the legs go off upon  
the present disorder coming on?

It had gone off before the present disorder.

How



How long before?

About two days.

Were both the King's feet without swelling on the 24th?

I think he left off both his great shoes on the 23d: He was lame and in pain in the muscles of his legs with the rheumatism on the 24th?

In what degree was he disordered on the 24th?

He had had a restless night on the Thursday; and when I saw His Majesty on Friday morning, he was low spirited, and complained much of the necessity of going to the levee. He complained all along of pains in the muscles of his thighs and legs, as he does also at present,

Have those pains in his thighs continued all along?

From the beginning.

Have those pains any relation to His Majesty's present illness?

I think not,

C

Was

Was it your opinion that the rash was struck in?

It is not my opinion.

Sir LUCAS PEPYS called in and examined,

You are desired to acquaint this Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of coming in person to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

Certainly is incapable.

What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

The hopes of His Majesty's recovery arise from the general consideration, that the majority of those afflicted with the same or similar disorder under which His Majesty now labours, do recover.

Can you form any judgement or probable conjecture of the duration of His Majesty's illness?

I can form no such conjecture:



Is His Majesty at times composed and quiet?

Frequently is.

Does his disorder abate during those periods?

Not in the least.

Doctor HENRY REVELL REYNOLDS  
called in and examined.

You are desired to acquaint this Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of coming in person to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

His Majesty is incapable of attending to any public business.

What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

I think there are well-founded hopes of His Majesty's recovery.

Can you form any judgement or probable conjecture of the duration of His Majesty's illness?

No; I cannot.

Upon what do you found your hopes of His Majesty's recovery?

Upon general experience; as the greater number of those afflicted with the same malady with His Majesty generally recover.

Doctor ANTHONY ADDINGTON called in and examined.

You are desired to acquaint this Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such, as to render him incapable of coming in person to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

I have not seen His Majesty this week past; but at that time he was certainly incapable of attending Parliament, or doing any public business.

What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

I have very great hopes of His Majesty's recovery.

Upon what foundation do you build those hopes?

I never



I never yet have heard that His Majesty has had any disorder whatever, from which I could infer that he could not recover ; and by recovery, I mean so as to be able to attend his Parliament, and attend any other business as well as ever he did ; but I think there are hopes in my mind, from some circumstances that I had not taken notice of before. I never heard that His Majesty was melancholy previous to his present indisposition ; and I do not recollect an instance of any patient who required a longer time to be perfectly cured than one year, who had not laboured under a pretty long and very considerable melancholy previous to his confinement.

Can you form any probable judgement of the duration of His Majesty's disorder ?

I cannot.

In what time have these disorders generally been cured ?

It has been my good fortune to see none who have not been cured within a year ; sometimes in four months from the time they came under my care, unless they were deemed incurable by the best judges before they were sent to my house.

Is it your opinion, that all disorders of the mind, not preceded by melancholy, have been cured within the year?

All the disorders within my practice, except as before, have been cured within the year; and I should think that such disorders would be curable within the year, unless they proceeded from some immoveable cause, such as the enlargement of the bone pressing upon the sensorium, or other similar causes.

Doctor THOMAS GISBURNE called in and examined.

You are desired to acquaint this Committee, whether the state of His Majesty's health is such as to render him incapable of coming in person to his Parliament, or of attending to any kind of public business?

I think him absolutely incapable.

What are the hopes you entertain of His Majesty's recovery?

As those in similar circumstances have often recovered, I hope His Majesty will.

Has a majority of them recovered?

They have.

Can



Can you form any judgement, or probable conjecture, of the duration of His Majesty's illness?

I think that cannot be ascertained,

THE END.

One can form only judgment of probable  
consequence of the duration of the Empire  
illustrate  
I think that cannot be maintained.